

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
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News Release



Date: October 28, 2004
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Seeks Public Comment on Oregon Seabird Colony Protection Measures

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today that it has evaluated a proposed program to reduce mammalian predation on seabirds where they threaten seabird reproductive success and survival. The evaluation is presented in a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) which is now available for public review and comment. The EA details how the proposed predator damage management program could affect the environment and human interests on and around seabird nesting areas at Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuge and Adjacent Mainland Areas.

Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge and Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuge provide essential nesting habitat and protection for the majority of the estimated 1.2 million nesting seabirds in Oregon. In 2001 and 2002, seabird nesting colonies of tufted puffins, pigeon guillemots, double-crested and Brandt's cormorants, black oystercatchers, and western gulls on Middle Coquille Point, Haystack and Elephant rocks near Bandon were negatively impacted or eliminated by mammalian predation. Mammalian predators have the potential to affect or have already affected Oregon seabird colonies. If mammalian predators were to become established on or around Oregon's seabird colonies on coastal headlands, rocks, or islands the effects could be catastrophic to native seabird populations.

The public is invited to participate by providing comments on the draft EA. Public input will help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decide the best way to protect seabirds from mammalian predation. If interested, obtain a copy of the draft EA by contacting the Service at 2127 SE Marine Science Drive, Newport, OR 97365 or by phone (541) 867-4550, E-mail:

orseabirds@fws.gov or by visiting <http://oregoncoast.fws.gov>. Comments must be received in writing and mailed to the address listed above or via email at orseabirds@fws.gov by December 9, 2004.

The Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 542 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts.